TAKE ACTION NOW

Improve the welfare of animals
Enhance food security
Address climate change

Farm Animal Welfare Recommendations

United Nations Climate Change Conference
Warsaw, Poland • COP 19/SBSTA 39
11-22 November, 2013
Climate change poses significant threats to ecosystems and human health, especially in low-income nations, and it endangers animals around the globe. Yet, the animal agriculture sector, which raised more than 73 billion land animals in 2011, is one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions worldwide, responsible for an estimated 14.5% of human-induced emissions and projected to grow substantially by 2050. Establishing a food secure, sustainable, and welfare-friendly future requires immediate changes in farm animal production and consumption patterns. It is imperative that the UNFCCC evaluate, enhance and safeguard animal welfare, as well as achieve other social and environmental goals.

Farm animals' welfare involves both their physical and psychological well-being. How farm animals are raised and treated can have important repercussions, not just for animal welfare, but also for environmental sustainability, food security, and the economic well-being of farmers. Animal welfare can support livelihoods and food security, and therefore adaptation, and is an important element to evaluate and safeguard when considering climate change solutions in agriculture.

**ACTION**

1. **COP Decision on Agriculture:** In Warsaw, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) should send a draft decision to the Conference of Parties (COP) calling for a series of SBSTA agriculture submissions and stakeholder workshops, particularly on humane and sustainable farm animal production. The September 2013 SBSTA submissions and SBSTA 39 in-session workshop focusing on adaptation and adaptation co-benefits are a good start. But this work should lead toward policy and finance that improves food security and sustainability, enhances the ability of farmers and farming systems to adapt to climate change, mitigates emissions, and improves animal welfare. Thus, Parties need to follow up with action and further work on specific issues. Specific SBSTA opportunities lie in filling research and knowledge gaps, particularly on the impacts of climate change solutions on animal welfare and other social and environmental goals, as well as possible co-benefits of good animal welfare practices on environmental goals.

2. **Finance:** Parties should provide finance for sustainable, animal-welfare-friendly agriculture adaptation and mitigation—capacity building, research and extension, knowledge, and tech transfer. To enable implementation of animal-welfare-friendly practices that support livelihoods and food security, these finance and related programs should incorporate veterinary care and animal welfare assessments and improvements.

3. **National, Regional, and Local Strategies:** Governments at all levels must specifically include equitable, animal-welfare friendly solutions for farm animal production when designing climate change mitigation and adaptation plans. Although climate change is a global problem, requiring global solutions, there is also a need for national and sub-national solutions. Such solutions should address agriculture in an equitable manner that promotes resilient landscapes, food security, animal welfare, and the ability to adapt to climate change.

4. **Sustainable Consumption:** Governments and civil society must ensure that national, regional and local policies manage unsustainable demand for animal products. This begins by raising awareness and implementing policies about the health, climate, and environmental benefits of reducing meat, egg, and milk consumption, particularly in developed nations and amongst higher income urban consumers in mid-income nations.
ENDNOTES


4. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. 2007. Climate change 2007: climate change impacts, adaptation and vulnerability; summary for policymakers. Working Group II Contribution to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report, Chapter 5: food, fibre, and forest products, pp. 275 and 277-278.


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